



OKLAHOMA NATIONAL GUARD  
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS  
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POLICY MEMORANDUM  
NUMBER 06-27

6 November 2006

WOUNDED IN ACTION AND NON-HOSTILE CASUALTY NOTIFICATION POLICY

1. REFERENCES:

- a. AR 600-8-1, Army Casualty Program, 7 April 2006.
- b. Department of the Army Personnel Policy Guidance (PPG) for Contingency Operations in Support of Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), 1 October 2006.

2. **PURPOSE:** This policy memorandum establishes the policy and procedures of the Oklahoma Army National Guard (OKARNG) Wounded in Action (WIA) and Non-hostile Casualty (NHC) notification process. This process is designed to provide immediate and systematic notification to the Next of Kin (NOK) of all OKARNG soldiers who have been hospitalized due to injury or illness while supporting contingency operations for the GWOT.

3. **SCOPE:** This policy is applicable to all units of the OKARNG.

4. **POLICY:** The OKARNG's policy is for each unit to have an understanding of the procedures set forth. The goal is to prevent any undue stress to soldiers' families by providing timely and compassionate notification as well as follow-up reports on the patient's progress and whereabouts.

5. EXPLANATION OF TERMS:

- a. WIA - A person who has incurred an injury due to an external agent or cause.

- b. NHC - A person who becomes a casualty due to circumstances not directly attributable to hostile action or terrorist activity. Casualties due to the elements, self-inflicted wounds, and combat fatigue are NHCs.

- c. Seriously wounded, injured, or ill (SI) - Casualty status of a person whose illness or injury is classified by medical authorities to be of such severity that there is cause for immediate concern, but there is no imminent danger to life.

- d. Very seriously wounded, injured, or ill (VSI) - Casualty status of a person whose illness or injury is classified by medical authorities to be of such severity that life is imminently endangered.

POLICY MEMORANDUM NUMBER 06-27 (CONT'D)

e. Not seriously wounded, injured, or ill (NSI) - Casualty status of a person whose injury or illness may or may not require hospitalization, medical authority does not classify as VSI or SI, and the person can communicate with the NOK.

f. NOK - The person most closely related to the casualty is considered primary NOK (PNOK) for casualty notification and assistance purposes. This is normally the spouse of married persons and the parents of single persons who have no children. The precedence of NOK with equal relationships to the member is governed by seniority (age). The rights of minor children shall be exercised by their parents or legal guardian.

g. Standard notification - Official notification from the Casualty Assistance Center (CAC) at Lawton, OK, directly to the Joint Operations Center (JOC), a 24 hour operation at Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ).

h. Non-standard notification - Any information received from a source not originating from the CAC that indicates an incident has occurred regarding an OKARNG soldier.

i. CAC - The CAC assigned responsibility for the area in which the casualty occurs or the area in which the NOK resides and who has casualty reporting responsibilities to the U.S. Army Resources Command. This term applies to both Continental United States (CONUS) and Outside Continental United States (OCONUS) CACs.

**6. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

a. The J1 will ensure this policy is distributed, implemented, and followed at all levels of the OKARNG as applicable.

b. Commanders at all levels will implement this policy within the scope of their responsibility to ensure timely and accurate notification of family members.

**7. ACTIONS REQUIRED FOR CASUALTY NOTIFICATION:**

a. Rules for Notification.

(1) Accomplish casualty notification to NOK in a timely, professional, dignified, and understanding manner.

(2) Direct all calls from non-standard sources to the JOC for logging and verification. If the JOC determines no standard casualty notice has been received from the CAC, it will provide information to the J1 Family Programs Office (J1-FPO) to initiate inquiry through the



POLICY MEMORANDUM NUMBER 06-27 (CONT'D)

CAC, medical channels, and the soldier's chain of command. If the J1-FPO verifies it is a WIA or NHC, he/she will immediately notify the JOC to begin implementing notification and casualty tracking procedures in accordance with (IAW) paragraph 8 below.

(3) Notification of NOK for WIAs and NHCs must be done by telephone. An initial in-person notification is not authorized because it may create undue stress to the family.

(4) Accomplish notification within two hours of receipt of initial casualty report from CAC.

(5) J1-FPO and the Major Subordinate Command (MSC) representative are the only personnel authorized to contact the casualty's NOK during the notification process. This will help minimize the risk of relaying inaccurate, unverified information to the family and will also allow the family to have a central point of contact for any further questions they may have.

(6) No notification of casualties will be made until verification of PNOK on the Soldier's DD Form 93 (Record of Emergency Data) is complete. (See paragraph 7b below)

b. Notification Desires of the WIA Soldier.

(1) The CAC will provide contact information to the JOC for the PNOK to include address and phone numbers listed on the soldier's DD Form 93. This information will be included in the standard notification that the CAC provides to the JOC. This information has already been verified by the Casualty and Memorial Affairs Operations Center (CMAOC) and reflects the latest DD Form 93 completed by the soldier.

(2) The J1-FPO will verify the soldier's DD Form 93 for standard notifications from the CAC that do not include this information. To accomplish this, the J1-FPO will access the Individual Personnel Electronic Management System (iPERMS) to review the soldier's latest DD Form 93.

(3) A soldier may list on the DD Form 93 not to notify PNOK in the event of injury or illness. The CMAOC will make the final determination for notification for casualties in status VSI, SI, or non-responsive soldiers, regardless of their election stated on the DD Form 93. In those cases, either the attending physician or the CMAOC will notify PNOK.

(4) All inquiries concerning the medical condition of casualties from NOK or other individuals not listed on the soldier's

POLICY MEMORANDUM NUMBER 06-27 (CONT'D)

DD Form 93 will be directed to the J1-FPO or the Deputy State Surgeon (DSS). The J1-FPO or the DSS will provide the appropriate information to avoid violations of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and Privacy Act and to ensure the soldier's wishes are respected.

(5) The attending physician or CMAOC will notify PNOK of soldiers under psychiatric care for attempted suicide. No one in the soldier's chain of command or at the JFHQ will make this notification.

c. Notification Information.

(1) The J1-FPO or designated MSC representative will notify PNOK of all information available, precluding any gory or embarrassing details. Be careful to fully disclose all the facts to lessen the concern and anxiety of the PNOK.

(2) Casualty items to disclose:

(a) Vehicle information (if applicable to incident).

(b) Date and time of incident.

(c) Place of incident.

(d) Circumstances.

(e) Diagnosis.

(f) Prognosis and place hospitalized or treated.

8. STEP BY STEP NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES:

a. Upon receipt of any notification of a casualty, the JOC will contact the primary point of contact (POC) immediately.

Primary:	J1-FPO/State Family Program Director
1 <sup>st</sup> Alternate:	J1-FPO/Family Assistance Center Coordinator
2nd Alternate:	JFHQ Full-Time Support Chaplain

b. J1-FPO will verify the casualty information and PNOK contact information IAW paragraph 7b above. After verification, the J1 FPO will notify the MSC and provide casualty information and PNOK contact information and allow the MSC the opportunity to make initial notification. J1-FPO will then notify the Chief of Staff (CoS) and the Public Affairs Officer (PAO) by telephone for critical injuries/illnesses and by email for non-critical.



POLICY MEMORANDUM NUMBER 06-27 (CONT'D)

c. MSC will execute PNOK notification via telephone within two hours and inform the family to direct any possible media calls to the PAO. An initial in-person notification is not authorized because it may create undue stress to the family. Should no contact be made with an MSC representative, the J1-FPO will make the initial PNOK contact.

d. MSC will notify the J1-FPO when NOK notification has been completed.

e. After confirming NOK was notified, the J1-FPO will notify the following in the order listed:

JOC  
CoS  
PAO  
J1  
Deputy J1  
DSS

f. JOC will notify the CAC that NOK was notified. If the CAC does not receive confirmation from the JOC within two hours they will do the notification to the NOK.

g. The PAO will maintain situational awareness and be prepared to assist family in dealing with the media.

h. Within 24 hours of WIA notification, the J1 will identify a WIA Coordination Team to be prepared to go to the pertinent active duty base the soldier will be transferred to in CONUS, if applicable. This will be on a case-by-case basis as determined by the J1. Team will consist of the following personnel:

Chaplain  
MSC Representative  
O6 Officer from MSC or JFHQ  
J1 Representative

i. The J1-FPO or designated MSC representative will provide updated information to PNOK as soon as it is available.

(1) Seriously and very seriously wounded, injured, or ill at a minimum of every 24 hours.

(2) Not seriously injured or ill at a minimum of every five days or until released from the medical facility.

9. **AWARD PRESENTATION:**

a. The J1 will determine the soldier's eligibility for the Purple Heart and verify when and where it will be awarded. If it will be awarded at a base in CONUS, the J1 will notify the MSC and the Command Group Executive Officer. The MSC will coordinate a visit by the Command Group and the WIA Coordination Team to coincide with the award presentation.

b. If the soldier is scheduled to return home prior to receiving the Purple Heart, the MSC will coordinate with the Command Group Executive Officer and the recipient on establishing a time and place for the award presentation.

10. **PATIENT TRACKING AND MANAGEMENT:**

a. J1-FPO and the DSS will maintain the lead on managing and tracking all casualties and will provide updated information to NOK, MSC, and Command Group as it is received.

b. The DSS will provide a weekly Medical Hold Report and a Daily Critical Status Report to the following personnel:

CoS  
MSC Administrative Officer  
PAO  
J1  
Deputy J1  
J1-FPO  
J1-Medical Branch (J1-MED)  
J1-Enlisted Branch Chief  
State Benefits Advisor  
J3  
State Surgeon

11. **HOME COMING:**

a. J1-FPO will notify the MSC, Command Group, and PAO when and where the soldier is scheduled to return home.

b. MSC will coordinate and conduct homecoming activities to welcome soldier upon return to state.

c. MSC will coordinate with the Command Group on conducting a ceremony to present the Purple Heart if the soldier did not receive it before returning home.

12. FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT:

a. J1-FPO will continue providing assistance to soldier and family as needed.

b. The DSS will continue tracking soldier's medical care and status and assisting the soldier to resolve any issues related to their medical treatment.

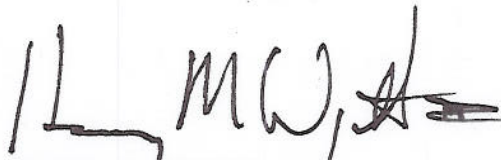
c. The State Benefits Advisor will assist soldiers in applying for Combat-Related Injury Rehabilitation pay and Traumatic Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage if eligible.

13. It is imperative that the prescribed procedures be followed to ensure the immediate and accurate notification of NOK and to initiate follow-on support and services. Prompt and accurate reporting will ensure the command and the NOK receives the information with minimum confusion. It will also allow proper assistance for the NOK and prevent improper reporting which may cause undue stress to the families. These procedures will also prevent duplication of effort within this headquarters and will unify this organization's process to help soldiers and their families.

14. This process will be utilized for all WIA and NHC notifications. Soldiers treated for minor non-combat related injuries and illnesses and returned to duty will not fall under this notification policy.

15. Point of contact at this department is JFHQ-OK J1 at (405) 228-5364 or DSN 628-5364.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

  
HARRY M. WYATT III  
Major General, OKANG  
The Adjutant General

DISTRIBUTION:

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